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THE CHURCHES IN ACTION

NEWS LETTER

OF THE

UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR LIFE AND WORK

AND THE

WORLD ALLIANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES

The above-mentioned organisations are not officially responsible for the opinions expressed in this News Letter
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THE PROBLEM OF FEDERATION

To an observer who has tried to hold fast to the belief that, whatever its faults, the League of Nations was the sole surviving child of the travail of the Great War and that as mankind grew accustomed to this first beginning of cooperative effort the child might grow up into an effective control of world affairs, the past months have been tragically perplexing. He had realised that the League was exposed to the charge of being a device for the maintenance of the status quo; that its programme of sanctions might involve a series of wars to end war; that its mandatory system had not put an end to feudal and proprietary concepts of sovereignty; that on crucial issues united action would be almost impossible of achievement. Nevertheless it had seemed not unreasonable to hope that proposals like that made by Sir Samuel Hoare last September might in time lead to a reconsideration of the whole system of national exclusiveness; that moral pressure might suffice without recourse to economic and military restraint; that the Abyssinian issue might force the dominant Powers to reopen the whole question of the rights of Europeans over other peoples; and that as the principle of discussion and arbitration became established a real *consensus gentium* might begin the task of creating a sense of solidarity and even a body of international law. Those hopes look futile and fantastic in the light of recent happenings.

" Pooled security will have to be replaced by pooled sovereignty. A Council of self-sufficient States recognising no higher authority than their own interests and constituted rather by bonds of external association than of community of spirit cannot avoid and may even intensify the appeal to war. A Committee of delegates in which each member desires to obtain the triumph of his own opinion or at least to prevent the success of any other must be transformed into a Fellowship in which all are united by loyalty to an end beyond their separate interests and each sees himself as sharing in a common quest. That is impossible as long as there is no acknowledgment of a super-national authority ". Such was the challenge presented to a recent conference held in connection with the preparation of the 1937 World Conference of Churches on Church, Community and State. It is not perhaps new. Professor Dulles' lecture at Princeton and Lord Lothian's Burge Memorial lecture at Oxford have given recent expression to it. The basal problem of the promotion of right personal relationships within human societies has been intensively studied. But in face of the crises of the present hour it deserves the earnest consideration of the Church.

For the Christian it may well be that such a challenge can only be met at first by denunciation of the State's claim to sole and self-sufficient authority. We are committed to the

acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God alone; even if we are not qualified to prescribe the form of government under which the family life of God's human subjects shall best be ordered. We are committed to the extension and deepening of that community which is the preliminary condition of any effective federation of peoples. Ultimately, it seems clear that we must supplement our denunciation of heresy by definitions of orthodoxy; if we protest against the deification of the State, we cannot escape the attempt to see and formulate a type of political organism less objectionable to the Christian conscience. We are all of us citizens as well as churchmen; and religion as man's relation to God cannot be isolated from politics which determine the form of his relations to his fellow-men. Every article of our creed carries with it political corollaries.

But at present, no doubt, we are very far from being in a position to lay down positive proposals, and to do so is the business of the statesman, not of the ecclesiastic. We shall perhaps best serve our time if while striving to discover and condemn notable errors of outlook, we direct our study of the problem to the analogous field which it occupies within the sphere of the Church. Here also we have the same issue to face. How can we transform inter-denominationalism into catholicity? How out of the separated communions can we achieve an oecumenical order? That is the subject to which this journal and the activities which it chronicles are devoted. In pressing towards its solution we shall be discovering principles and methods which will be relevant to other fields. As we learn to see our denominational differences within the unity of the *una sancta*, and to discover how that unity can be given effective expression, we may hope to be contributing something to the international problem which the tension of the past weeks has made acute.

Charles E. Raven.

LIFE AND WORK

PREPARATIONS FOR THE OXFORD WORLD CONFERENCE

It is not possible, in these columns, to give anything but a scanty and fleeting glimpse of the tremendous spiritual struggle which, in the sphere of the 1937 preparations, is compelling the attention of ever wider circles of churchmen, theologians and laymen alike. As already indicated in the last report, the comprehensive study work on the main tasks connected with the Oxford preparations is at present in process of crystallisation, the Oxford conference being in itself but a first stage in a much more far-reaching undertaking.

What burning problems and tasks occupied the attention of the group which met in England from April 17 to 20 to discuss *The Church and International Order* is illustrated from a particular viewpoint in the article printed above. It indicates what general problems predominate today on the field of international relations, and what particular difficulties prevent their real solution. The tensions, moreover, of recent months have revealed, with the utmost clarity, the dangers that arise under the pressure of the demoniac forces which come into play when nationalism prevails or when cosmopolitanism holds the field. The study conference laid particular emphasis on the ultimate foundations on which a *Christian* judgment in the matter of international relations can and must be based, and especially on the significance in this context of the Christian belief in the Church Universal.

In their search for a positive answer to these questions, churchmen today are confronted, with a gravity that can hardly be exaggerated, with the problem of Law. Is there an understanding of Law, common to mankind, or does the differentiation in national minds make that impossible? And what contribution to the solution of the problem can and must be made by the Christian interpretation of Law? Here the contrast, running right through all nations and states, between the static and the dynamic conception of Law in handling the international problem, assumes fundamental importance. At the same time the question arises of the limitations of legal order and its actual significance in the formation of international relations and, in particular, the question as to how the Christian concern for the establishment of an international order of law is to be realised. It is against this background of law and justice, — and, for the Christian, mainly against this background, — that *the war problem* has to be approached. War undoubtedly affords the most obvious proof of the inadequacy, in the face of the disruptive forces of evil, of all human efforts for order in an international sphere. The Church is taking part in the struggle to abolish war, on account of the distress and

spiritual deterioration which it entails. But this struggle against war cannot be an ultimate end in itself : it must form part of a comprehensive effort to establish a satisfactory and stable international order.

In the study of these and other aspects of the international problem with which the conference dealt, a number of leading experts on the field of international politics are taking part, and in all the Churches the activities of the available groups are being directed towards a joint study of the main issues involved. In particular, the World Alliance for International Friendship is seeking to mobilise collaboration on these problems within its various national groups.

Similarly the question of the law has a central importance in the studies undertaken on *the problem of the State* and on *the political function of the Church*, thus forming a focussing-point for the whole work. Oecumenical exchange of thought on the two last named tasks of the Oxford Conference has received a decided forward impulse through recent, very important contributions from the Anglo-Saxon side.

Group discussions held in London in the second half of April led to the formulation of definite plans for the work on *the Christian conception of history*, and on *education in relation to Church, Community and State.* As regards the first subject, the earlier conference on the international order had already emphasised once more the need, in the struggle for an understanding of the meaning of history, of a clear-cut Christian revaluation of the concrete events of the historic process. As regards the second, it may here only be remarked that the collaboration of leading educationalists has been secured in the study of the present crisis in education and in Christian education in particular. And if, in the examination of all these problems, the crisis in Christianity itself emerges as one of the basic causes of the present world changes, such a conclusion reveals the ultimate depths of the whole undertaking and the pivot upon which all these endeavours turn. All those who are more closely responsible for the Oxford preparations have been once more impressed in the last weeks and months by the tremendous impetus which recent events have given to this world-wide oecumenical campaign. There has been, in these last weeks, an almost crushing sense of the inadequacy of all human efforts, but at the same time a much stronger and mightier sense of the hidden working of Him who is behind it all, the Lord of history, the Father of Jesus Christ, who draws near to all those who earnestly call upon Him. But the summons to co-operation in the oecumenical undertaking comes not only to the ever-growing fellowship of groups and individuals at work in the different Churches and countries. It comes to all church people as well : a summons to join in the one great fellowship of prayer and intercession, the innermost secret of all Christian activity and the key to the ultimate realisation of all endeavours.

WORLD ALLIANCE

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENTS

We wish to remind the Councils and friends of the World Alliance in all lands and through them the Churches and individual Christians of our duties and opportunities in this hour of crisis and danger. It raises immediate political issues, but it also reveals the fundamental problem of building up a new world order. It is for the statesmen of the world to seek solutions; it is for us to help to create an atmosphere of desire for justice and goodwill.

I. Our primary concern must always be to be true to our own faith and profession; first to seek the Kingdom of God, to realise the things invisible and eternal as the highest and dominant values, to place ourselves under the influence of Christ, His law and example, His pardoning and renewing grace and the guidance of His Spirit. In its present state of confusion and anxiety the world is watching those who profess Christ in the hope that they may have a redeeming message for humanity; but also with bitter disappointment if they have nothing to say and to do. Many have made a religion of social or national enthusiasm, because to them Christians seem unreal in their failure to understand the trouble and need of mankind and to exert the spirit of unselfishness, heroism and sacrifice. That Christians should be true Christians is the first claim of the hour.

II. In a world which is in some way conscious of its unity, but constantly torn asunder by the conflict of races, nations, classes and parties, the Christian Church should be a nervous system sensitive to all claims of universal fellowship. It is a scandal if the members of the Body of Christ cannot find and express their essential solidarity. Therefore in all strife Christians should be the first to try to understand the views and interests of all sides.

III. According to the Christian conception, Justice is a reality above the interests of individuals, nations and classes. The State in all social and international order is to be the servant of Justice. If it fails to serve such a high purpose it will be under judgment and sooner or later under punishment. The social and national unrest of to-day is often unconsciously due to a conflict between the craving for Justice and the existing conditions.

IV. Although conscious that every order in this world will remain imperfect, Christians should always strive to bring real conditions nearer to the ideals of Justice. If they do not understand the social aspirations of those who suffer, they will not be able to interpret the Christian message. In international affairs Christians should recognise the rights of all peoples and should be willing to accept such a revision of existing treaties as will remove any discrimination unduly exercised against any nation.

V. Every reform should serve the building up of Justice, Security, and Peace and not their destruction. War, above all, is no means of removing injustices. Being the brutal regime of force, it will always create new injustices and leave more difficulties than it has solved. No doubt there is in the nations a widespread horror of war, not only because of the sufferings which modern technique may render unspeakable, but also on moral grounds.

The danger is that the world, without really knowing it, may drift into another great war. Therefore in all negotiations, however difficult, all parties should be firmly resolved not to let loose war. If the fear of war could be removed, just and peaceful arrangements would be much more possible.

VI. Whatever may be gained by a nation through breaking a treaty cannot be compared with the loss. It should be the glory of a nation to observe its solemn obligations, however disagreeable, until they can be removed by legal means. By breaking them a nation inevitably loses the confidence of other nations and the whole social structure suffers when international law becomes ineffective and useless. Statesmen will have to consider what new arrangements are to be made and to find effective methods for settling disputes by impartial judgment and guaranteeing the observance of treaties.

VII. In such a work they should be surrounded by the sympathy, the best thought and the prayers of those who believe in God. We therefore call upon our friends to accept this common task. The individual, however limited his influence may seem, can be used as one of the instruments for God's plan for the world if he is open to the power from above.

VALDEMAR AMMUNDSEN, D.D.,
Bishop of Haderslev, Denmark, President

DICKINSON, *Président d'Honneur.*

LONDON, March, 1936.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL COUNCILS

The Balkan Countries

Professor Zankow reports that a *Bulgarian* National Conference has been held in the mountain monastery of Tscherepisch, near Sofia. Metropolitans Stefan and Paissy were present, and five university professors gave addresses. The conference was attended by some forty to fifty members and was of the greatest possible value in intensifying and stimulating the work of the World Alliance in Bulgaria. Organised to some extent in preparation for the forthcoming Balkan Conference, the main topic of this Bulgarian meeting was : " The Peace Problem from the Christian Standpoint ".

Professor Zankow has recently been in *Yugoslavia*, discussing with the Bishop of Novi Sad and the Yugoslav National Council the possibilities of extending and rendering more effective the activities of the World Alliance in that country. He also lectured in Belgrade on " Christian peace work in the Balkans " and on " the character and significance of the oecumenical movement ".

The Balkan Conference, the second of its kind, to be held principally as a conference of the Balkan Youth Committees, will take place in Roumania this month at a monastery near Czernowitz. The Christian attitude to the peace problem will on that occasion be historically surveyed from the viewpoints of the Old and New Testaments, the Early Fathers, pacifism and the organisation of peace through ecclesiastical and secular methods. Attention will also be given to the practical question of peace work among youth. It is hoped to secure, for this conference, the collaboration of Orthodox youth leaders from such countries as Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Carpathian region of Russia.

Great Britain

Dr. Nicolas Zernov, World Alliance Youth Secretary for the Balkan States, spoke at a series of meetings organised by the Leeds Youth Group in February last, on the subject of " Youth and the Way to Peace ". In addition to the general public, Dr. Zernov's audiences included the University students,

and girls and boys from secondary schools at Leeds and Harrogate. Dr. Zernov's presentation of Christianity as the only solution of the social, economic and international problems of the day, and his insistence on the spirit of sacrifice which, individually and nationally, the acceptance of such an outlook must involve, led to a wide range of questions and discussion. Dr. Zernov also stressed the need for efforts towards the reunion of the Churches as an integral part of all peace activity, and dwelt on the key position held in that connection by the World Alliance, in its work of drawing Christians of all denominations together.

In Manchester, some remarkable peace meetings have been held by a committee representing the World Alliance and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The speakers at these meetings, which were filled to capacity, were Mr. George Lansbury, Miss Ruth Fry and the Rev. Henry Carter. The meetings have led to a number of enquiries from those whose interest has been aroused in the work of the two organisations.

Ireland

Ireland's contribution to a Christian world order — such was the title of an invitation addressed by the " Irish Christian Fellowship " to ministers and laymen from Northern Ireland and from the Irish Free State to confer together on the challenge of the secular civilisation, Nationalism and Communism to Christianity. Preceded by devotional meetings on " the mind of Christ for today " and followed by group discussions in the afternoon on education, international and social problems, reunion and personal religion, the problems of secular civilisation as expressed through the impact of the economic life and of Communism were presented very ably by Dr. K. Polanyi, from Austria. Mr. Henriod lectured on Nationalism, after having given an opening address on the first night on the present world situation. Another public meeting afforded the opportunity for an extremely interesting presentation of " Our Problems in Ireland Today ", introduced by lay speakers from the two divided sections of Ireland, while the discussions of the last two evenings on " The Source of Power " and " The Road Ahead " lifted the conference to a very high spiritual level. This conference, which was held from April 14 to 17 in Dublin, and attended by some hundred delegates, proved a constructive and stimulating contribution to the preparation of the 1937 World Conference and to the aims of the World Alliance. It provided the speakers from abroad with a welcome occasion to share, in a spirit of truly Christian fellowship, in the perplexing problems of the day, viewed from the angle of the eternal Gospel. The conference was excellently prepared by Miss K. Huggard and presided over by the Rev. J. S. Rutherford.

Netherlands

On March 13, the Dutch Council of the World Alliance sent the following telegram to the Council of the League of Nations assembled in London :

> " The Dutch Council of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, deeply impressed by the Appeal of the Government of Abyssinia to the League of Nations, regards it as a demand of the Christian conscience to consider this appeal with all due seriousness and feels prompted to urge upon your esteemed assembly the necessity of maintaining the principles of right and justice for which the League so vigorously stands."

The Dutch Council also telegraphed to the Committee of Thirteen on April 6 the assurance that the prayers of the Netherlands Churches had been asked for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Committee's deliberations. The clergy of the Churches represented on the National Council of the World Alliance came together to pray for the preservation of peace and for a way of reconciliation out of the present conflict.

U. S. A.

The National Council of the World Alliance is one of the thirty-three peace organisations represented on the National Peace Conference, which has been formed with a view to concentrating and unifying the efforts for the promotion of better international relations. " The aim of the conference ", its statement reads, " is not to diminish the activity of any of its member bodies, but to unite their voices, when they can be united, into a single expression of the best thought of the peace movement of the nation." Among the conference's planned activities are: the launching of a nationwide radio programme of peace education, the organisation of public meetings for the discussion of the peace and war problem, the issuing of press releases and other publicity material regarding the conference's programme.

Plans are in progress for the development of an enlarged World Alliance youth activity. It has been difficult to conduct an adequate youth programme amidst the multiplicity of organisations for young people existing in the United States, without some person or group being prepared to give a large amount of time to its leadership. It is now hoped that an American youth secretary, probably on a full-

time basis, will be secured for this responsibility, and that a representative and responsible Youth Committee will be formed. The enterprise assumes special significance and promise through the proposal that it should be linked up with a movement initiated by the Class of 1934 at Union Theological Seminary, for the establishment of a memorial to the late William P. Merrill, Jr., a member of that class and son of Dr. Merrill of the World Alliance. There is every prospect that this joint relationship will be realised.

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP TOUR

A tour to Prague, Vienna and Budapest, from August 8 to 23, at a cost of £18.15 per head (with third class railway travel), has been arranged in the cause of international friendship through the Churches. The arrangements allow for six days in Budapest, two in Prague and four in Vienna, the journey being broken at Nuremberg and Munich. Full particulars are obtainable from the British Christian Council, 1 Arundel Street, London, W.C.2.

GENERAL NEWS

FAITH AND ORDER

72 Churches have now appointed 250 delegates and 55 alternates to represent them at the 1937 World Conference in Edinburgh. A revised edition of the list of those appointed will be issued before this year's meeting of the Continuation Committee, which is to be held at Clarens, Switzerland, from August 31st to September 3rd. Invitations to attend this meeting will be sent to all delegates and alternates whose appointment is notified to the secretary in time for this to be done.

Secretary's Visit to America

Canon Hodgson, the Theological and General Secretary to the Continuation Committee, was in America from January 28th to March 18th of this year. The primary purpose of his visit was to deliver the Bishop Paddock Lectures at the General Theological Seminary in New York. These have since been published by Messrs. Longmans Green & Co under the title *The Grace of God in Faith and Philosophy*, and are a discussion of problems arising out of the Report of the Theological Committee on the Doctrine of Grace (Faith and Order pamphlet No. 66).

While in America Canon Hodgson met the American Regional Committee in New York, and a group of Canadian members of the Movement in Toronto. He also addressed members of the theological faculties of the constituent colleges of the University of Toronto at a luncheon given by the President of the University, Dr. Cody; and a group of religious leaders at a dinner in Detroit given by Dr. F. B. Fisher. At Cambridge, Mass., he was the guest of Dean Sperry, the chairman of the Commission on the Church's Unity in Life and Worship, and at the conclusion of that visit was present at a two day session of that Commission of which a further account appears below.

Discussions with Dr. MacCracken, the chairman of the Finance Committee, as to the best methods of raising a fund to meet the expenses of the Edinburgh Conference led to the conclusion that in each country supporters of the Movement should be asked to use the methods most suitable to their own circumstances. In America Faith and Order are joining with Life and Work in making an appeal for funds to finance the Edinburgh and Oxford Conferences. It is hoped that this co-operative effort will have a valuable educational effect in showing those to whom the appeal is made that the two Movements are working together towards a common end.

Work of the Commissions

Commission II on the Church of Christ and the Word of God. Despite his other heavy responsibilities Dr. Zöllner, the chairman of this Commission, has been able to report that its work is making steady progress. He has secured the assistance of Professor D. Stählin of Münster as secretary to the Commission, in place of Professor H. Sasse of Erlangen who had to resign owing to the pressure of other duties.

Commission III on the Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments. Under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Gloucester this Commission has made such good progress that it is hoped to begin printing the proposed volume of essays shortly after Whitsuntide. In its general lines it is expected that this Report will be similar to that already produced on the Doctrine of Grace : that is to say, there will be the volume containing the essays contributed and also a brief Report based upon them which will also be issued separately as a pamphlet. The essays in the volume will be grouped under four headings : I Views of

Modern Churches, II Biblical Basis, III Historical Study, IV Constructive Statements.

Commission IV on The Church's Unity in Life and Worship. This subject has been divided into five sections, on each of which a single scholar is being asked to prepare a monograph based on material collected from sources representing as many different churches as possible. Dr. H. Paul Douglass is preparing a historical record of actual achievements in the field of reunion during the decade 1927-1937. Dean Sperry is preparing material for the discussion of non-theological factors which have created disunion. Professor G. J. Slosser is collecting evidence on the meaning attached to the words " the Communion of Saints ", and the part played by this doctrine in different churches. Professor Angus Dun is in charge of the question " What is our ideal when we speak of church unity ? ", and Dr. William Adams Brown has for his subject " Intermediate Acts which make towards Unity."

At a two-day meeting of the Commission held in New York on March 6th and 7th preliminary drafts were submitted by each of these scholars and discussed by the whole Commission. It was decided that Dr. Douglass' historical record should be published by itself as a book, and that the reports on the other subjects should be issued separately in the form of pamphlets which can be used as agenda papers by Section IV of the Edinburgh Conference. Although each report will be drafted by the scholar in charge, they will be revised from time to time at meetings of the whole Commission, and the final form approved for presentation to the Conference in similar fashion. It is proposed to publish such of these reports as turn out to be suitable for general reading as well as for use as agenda papers at Edinburgh.

THE MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL IN 1938

At the meeting of the Committee of the International Missionary Council held in September, 1935, at Northfield, U.S.A., it was decided to hold a General Meeting of the International Missionary Council in the Far East in October, 1938. The place decided upon, Kowloon, may have to be changed, owing to unforeseen difficulties, but it is reasonably certain that the place of meeting will be in the Far East. The central theme of the meeting is one which arises directly from the concrete situation in which Missions throughout the world today find themselves. It is the theme of the upbuilding of the indigenous church in Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world where missionary work has been carried on as a part of the historic, world-wide Christian fellowship. No subject lies more nearly at the heart of missionary thinking than this. We live in times when Christian work is threatened by so many external dangers that it is essential to concentrate on those things that will endure.

The general plan of the meeting has already been discussed by one of the secretaries of the Council, the Rev. William Paton, with the National Christian Councils in Japan, Korea, China, India and the Near East, and with groups of people in Java. Steps are being taken to initiate enquiries and preparatory work along the five divisions accepted at the Northfield meeting. These are : (*a*) the Faith by which Churches live, (*b*) the witness of the Church in evangelism, (*c*) the inner life and strength of the Church, (*d*) the Church in relation to its environment, social, economic, racial, political, (*e*) co-operation, i.e., the fullest use of available resources by united planning and action.

On these points it is possible now to add to what was decided at Northfield. It is already plain that the studies preparing for the 1937 Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State will bear closely upon the thought of the 1938 meeting on the fundamentals of the Christian Message. The principal difficulty is one of a technical character, namely, how to relate the thinking done by Europeans in relation to European thought forms and historical situations to the totally different situations of the East. In regard to the study of evangelism, already a great deal has been done. We live in a day when in India, China and Japan there are great evangelistic campaigns launched by the Christian Councils, and shared in wholeheartedly by the indigenous churches and missions of different denominations. Essentially the task before us is to learn the lessons both in success and in failure, not only of past evangelistic efforts, but of those proceeding before our eyes today.

All the problems of the growing churches come into the preparation under the third head. They include such important questions as the training of the ministry, the place of Christian education in the Church's life, and the difficult and important question of the economic basis of the Church and the support of its ministry, and the closely allied question of the use of voluntary service and the best way in which to prepare it. Here also will come into discussion the question of the relation of the indigenous church to the community life and culture, and the way to escape "foreignness" in church life. Groups of people in different countries are already becoming related to these studies.

The International Missionary Council's Department of Industrial & Social Research and

Counsel, of which Mr. J. Merle Davis is the Director, will devote its energies during the ensuing two and a half years to the fourth point, the relation of the Church to its environment, and it is probable that Mr. Davis will spend the bulk of these months in the Far East and in India, assisting the Christian leaders in these countries in facing these problems.

In India a notable step forward has been taken in regard to the fifth point, on co-operation, by the holding, during Mr. Paton's recent visit, of a series of regional conferences in each of which realistic consideration was given to the possibilities of combined planning of work. In India this question is likely to become more pressing than perhaps anywhere else in the world, owing to the enormous dimensions likely to be assumed by the Depressed Classes movement towards Christianity.

YOUTH COMMISSION

In a growing number of undertakings the Youth Commission is entering into closer collaboration than heretofore with the other international Christian youth organisations. It is well to remind ourselves of the Commission's special function in this larger relationship, as well as to state the nature of the joint enterprises in which it is to share responsibility. The groups which at present come particularly into consideration in this connection are the World's Y.M.C.A., the World's Y.W.C.A. and the World's Student Christian Federation.

The distinctive strength and contribution of the Youth Commission in its collaboration with these other bodies is its direct relation to the Churches. In its capacity as the youth department of the Universal Christian Council and the World Alliance it is, through its parent organisations, a Church body. It is definitely responsible to the parent groups and all its actions are subject to their approval. It need scarcely be said that it exists to represent to the young people of the Churches the ideals of the parent organisations, and in turn to represent to the parent groups the thinking and concerns of young people in this same sphere of interest.

This function becomes stronger when the Youth Commission enters into cooperative undertakings with groups which have less definite church relationships. Such collaboration enables it to transmit to young church people not alone the purposes and interests of its parent organisations, but the values also of the work of the other groups with which it collaborates, in so far as these two spheres of contribution are harmonious. It enables it on the other side to represent to its parent bodies the concerns of Christian young people in relations outside their specific church connections. It furnishes in short the organisational link with the Churches which the other bodies do not always have.

One instance of collaboration in this direction is the World Conference of Christian Youth, to be held in Europe in the summer of 1938. To quote from the minutes of the last meeting of the General Conference Committee : " this is to be a joint Conference of all the organisations cooperating, rather than a strictly Youth Commission Conference inviting the other organisations' support. This is recognised to involve the sharing of responsibility as well as the sharing of representation. " The theme of the Conference is to be " determined by the results of Oxford, as well as by the results of the work on similar subjects done in the meantime by all the cooperating organisations."

Further indication of the collaborative character of the Conference is to be found in the extent to which each of the groups named above is planning to direct its own programme and resources towards 1938. Details are impossible in the present space, but it is significant that starting as early as the joint conference of these three organisations in Dassel in June, the conferences, camps and publications of these bodies will devote a large share of their attention to the subjects which the 1938 Conference will embrace.

In addition to these and other non-church Christian organisations, it is of vital importance that not only the actual denominational groups in the different countries, but such interdenominational and international church bodies as the World's Sunday School Association, International Christian Endeavour, and the youth division of Faith and Order should equally participate in the 1938 Conference. The beginnings of this collaboration are being inaugurated through the Youth Commission, and it is planned that approximately half the total Conference membership should be drawn from these groups. This is a significant practical instance of the function of the Commission, through its official oecumenical position, as the link with the Churches in a joint undertaking.

A second enterprise in which this relationship finds expression is in the sphere of literature and publications. A Literature Committee representing the organisations cooperating in the 1938 Conference has been established for the primary purpose of preparing study outlines, pamphlets, bibliographies, programme suggestions and other materials for the Conference ; but the effects of its work will reach beyond the Conference itself and will have wide value for many other aspects of the programmes of the respective organisations. Here again it will be the function of the Youth Commission to furnish contact with the Churches, including

the interdenominational church groups mentioned. It will seek to draw out all the literature resources which these bodies can contribute, and in turn to make available to these groups in the most effective way possible the results of the Literature Committee's combined work.

A third joint undertaking is embodied in the plans of the international Christian youth organisations for participation in the League of Nations Youth Conference (see also p. 10). With the splendid organisational facilities at the command of the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A. and W.S.C.F. for the recruiting of delegations from their respective constituencies, the Youth Commission finds again that its special function in this joint enterprise is to secure an equally representative delegation of young people from the Churches themselves.

Such collaboration is consequently not duplication but distinct mutual assistance. It brings the Commission and its parent oecumenical bodies into touch with the great constituency and resources embodied in the other organisations, providing an enlarged field and facilities for the furtherance of the Oecumenical Movement's ideals; and it in turn brings these other groups into closer relations with the Oecumenical Movement and with the actual Churches.

We have not considered the even greater mutual enrichment in the deeper things of the spirit. But it should not be left unsaid that in this respect especially the respective movements are essential to one another for the cultivation and expression of their common purposes. One way to unite the Church is to unite its related bodies in the fellowship of common Christian enterprise.

SUMMER PLANS

The Officers' Meeting of the World Alliance and the Administrative Committee of the Universal Christian Council will meet in Paris, the first named on June 16 and 17 and the second on June 18 and 19, with a joint session on the afternoon of June 17. These committees will be specially concerned with settling the final details of the programmes for the summer meetings of the two organisations which will be held, as last year, at Chamby sur Montreux, Pau having had to be abandoned for reasons of a practical nature.

The meeting of the Management Committee of the World Alliance, from August 15 to 18, will be preceded by a session of the Minorities Commission from August 11 to 13, at which reports will be presented on the relief afforded by the Churches to German refugees, on the measures to be adopted to secure liberty of conscience in Soviet Russia and on the situation of the Church in Memel. The Commission will also deal with: "the rights and duties of religious minorities within the majority State".

The Management Committee will open with the presentation of reports from the Commissions and from the National Councils of the World Alliance, on their activity in the past year, and on the questions which they have undertaken to study: the specific tasks of the Church in the face of the present international situation; traffic in arms; conscientious objection. The Management Committee will also settle administrative questions coming within its scope. The last two days will be set aside for the presentation and discussion of one of the particularly important aspects of international relations and contacts, namely: the problem of a just distribution of populations and of raw material from the Christian point of view. It is, of course, possible that the Committee may be called upon to modify its programme in the light of unforeseen developments in the international situation.

The Committee will also consider how the World Alliance can best collaborate in the World Conference of Churches to be held in 1937.

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The Universal Christian Council, which met last at Fanö, Denmark, will assemble at Chamby from August 21 to 25, and will devote the main part of its deliberations to preparations for the 1937 World Conference on Church, Community and State. Dr. Oldham, Chairman of the Advisory Commission on Research, will present a report giving a general survey of the final stages still to be covered, and on the programme of the conference itself, on which questions the Council will be called upon to take decisions. Reports from the Sections and Commissions will bear on the same subject.

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Carrying further the series of preparatory study conferences held so far, a small conference will take place at York from July 15 to 18, under the chairmanship of the Archbishop of York, on the social and political functions of the Church. And a few specialists will also meet, from July 18 to 21, to discuss the whole programme concerning publications in preparation for 1937, and in particular the volumes which are to appear on "The Christian Conception of Man" and "Christian Faith and the Common Life". In July, too, will open the third oecumenical seminar, under the direction of Professor A. Keller, full details of which will be found below.

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While the Faith and Order Movement is meeting at Clarens-Montreux from August 31 to September 3, two important manifestations will be taking place in Geneva to which the Christian Churches cannot remain indifferent : a universal assembly for peace, from September 3 to 6 (see below) ; and a world youth conference, under the auspices of the Federation of League of Nations Societies, to be held from August 31 to September 7. It is to be hoped that many young Christians from all denominations and nationalities will take part in the discussion of the conference on " the moral, religious and philosophic basis of peace. "

The annual international conference of the Oecumenical Youth Commission will take place, from September 8 to 14, at La Borcarderie, Valangin, Neuchâtel choosing for its theme " Christian Youth and the Way of Peace ". Further information on either of these youth assemblies may be obtained from our headquarters, 41 Avenue de Champel, Geneva.

ŒCUMENICAL SEMINAR

The third Œcumenical Seminar will be held this year from July 28 to August 15, under the patronage of the Universal Christian Council and of the Faculty of Theology of Geneva University. Courses will be included on the life and thought of the different Churches and on the main theological trends of the day. A very special contribution will thus be made to the preparations for the coming world conferences of Churches.

The programme of the seminar includes the following lectures and lecturers : " The Church and the World in the New Testament : the Hostility of the World to the Church " (Prof. Dibelius, Heidelberg) ; " The Oecumenical Significance of the Augsburg Confession (Prof. Althaus, Erlangen) ; " The Religious Meaning of History " (Prof. Tillich, New York) ; " Essential Types of Christian Worship " (Prof. Will, Strasbourg) ; " The Renaissance of Ecclesiastical Law " (Prof. Fleiner, Zürich) ; " The Anglican Conception of the Church in Past and Present " (Prof. Gavin, New York) ; " National Church — Free Church in Dutch Protestantism " (Prof. Haitjema, Groningen) ; " Law and Gospel in the Sermon on the Mount " (Prof. Thurneysen, Basle) ; " Eschatology and History " (Dr. Hans Lilje, Berlin) ; " Natural Theology and the Theology of Revelation in the Orthodox Church " (Prof. Vyscheslavzeff Russian Orthodox Academy, Paris) ; " Mutual Influences between European and American Protestantism " (Prof. Homrighausen, Butler University, Indianapolis) ; " The Oecumenical Movement and the Responsibility towards the Church " (Prof. Keller, Geneva) ; " Present Day Missionary Problems " (Dr. Visser't Hooft, Geneva) ; " The Problem of the State in Present Day Oecumenical Studies " (Dr. H. Schönfeld, Research Department of the Universal Christian Council, Geneva) ; " Social Politics of the Present Time " (Dr. G. Thélin, I.L.O., Geneva) ; " Church and State in Anglicanism ", (by an Anglican lecturer still to be appointed). Dr. Kagawa, who is to be in Europe this summer, has also promised to lecture to the Seminar, on a subject still to be announced.

The Seminar will use the English, French and German languages, with provision for translation at all lectures. The full programme and particulars are obtainable on application to Professor Adolf Keller, 1, rue des Photographes, Geneva.

CONGRESS OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY

An event of considerable importance for the Orthodox Church and for the Oecumenical Movement in general is planned for the coming autumn, in the shape of the first Congress of Orthodox Theology, which will open on November 23, in Athens. Part of the programme will be devoted to considering the position of theological science in the Orthodox Church, to the exterior forces which have influenced Orthodox theology since the fall of Constantinople, and to the orientation of the new Orthodox theology to the theology of the Early Fathers. Various ecclesiastical questions will also be discussed : the problem of the convocation of an Oecumenical Synod ; the method of handling generally urgent problems by the various Churches, in the event of a delay in the convocation of an Oecumenical Synod ; the positive service now being rendered to the Church by theological science in codifying the old canon laws and in the critical revision and publication of the old liturgical texts ; the mission of the Orthodox Church at home and abroad ; Orthodoxy and present-day problems in relation to culture, the State and social matters. In considering the participation of the theological faculties in scientific activity generally, the possibility will be discussed of founding an Orthodox theological review, and attention given to the need for establishing close inter-faculty relations.

Further information may be obtained from the Dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Athens, Professor H. Alivisatos, 27 Voulisstrasse, Athens.

UNIVERSAL PEACE RALLY

At a meeting held in Geneva at the end of April, under the chairmanship of Viscount

Cecil, and attended by representatives of a number of national and international organisations (such as the League of Nations Union, Ex-Service associations, syndicates, women's organisations, etc.), it was decided that a World Peace Congress should take place in Geneva from September 3 to 6 next, on the eve of the meeting of the League of Nations Assembly. The congress will take as its basis the following principles : the inviolability of obligations resulting from treaties ; the reduction and limitation of armaments by international agreement and the suppression of arms manufacture profits ; the strengthening of the League of Nations to prevent and stop wars by the most effective organisation possible of collective security and mutual assistance ; the adoption, within the framework of the League of Nations, of effective measures, to rectify those international situations which are likely to provoke war. The conference will seek to discover and distribute new methods of propaganda in favour of peace by working directly on public opinion. Lord Cecil and the former French Air Minister, M. Pierre Cot, have been asked to preside over this gathering. At the preparatory meeting, the Soviet Union was represented by two delegates, and in the course of the discussion the wish was expressed that the Churches and religious forces of all countries should lend their support to this world demonstration.

While the principles which the conference proposes to discuss deserve to be upheld by all those for whom war is a brutal instrument of violence, giving rise to more difficulties and injustices than it settles, it seems at least regrettable that in composition and orientation the conference should appear to exclude any representation of certain outlooks, and, in particular, of nationalist ideologies and more conservative standpoints ; for those who uphold them are, in their desire for peace and their willingness to make use of all pacific means of arriving at international understanding, at least as sincere as those representing the Communist element invited to take part in the congress.

BOOK REVIEWS

SHEDD, CLARENCE P. : *Two Centuries of Student Christian Movements.* Association Press, New York, 1934, 465 pages. $3.00.

The value of Professor Shedd's book for American Christian leaders, particularly for leaders of students, can scarcely be overstated. There is nothing comparable with it for concise completeness or for effective arrangement of the wide material which it embraces. Its essentially chronological story is amply punctuated, and yet not diverted, by quotations from well-documented sources. Yet the book is more than a factual history. The author's personal identification with a large number of the movements which he describes, and his own forward-looking views with regard to them, lend to the volume a distinct personality. The personal element is perhaps the most striking characteristic of the book ; it comprises a constant succession of intimate and revealing personal encounters between living people, and speaks through letters, conversations, addresses, diaries and other means of conveying conviction.

It is no reflection upon this volume to say that its title might easily be misleading to non-Americans expecting to find a world-embracing treatment of " Student Christian Movements ". The book is primarily concerned with these movements in the author's own country. Where the field is wider, it is still reviewed from an essentially American perspective. The work was quite evidently and naturally undertaken for home consumption. Yet the American emphasis lends to the volume an unexpected interest for all who are concerned with the oecumenical movement. Without setting out to do so, it reveals the strategic part which the Student Christian Movement, in America and in its spread throughout the world, has played in oecumenical development. This is a valuable source book for a knowledge of the soil in which one important country has attempted to sow the seeds of oecumenicity.

ARSENIEV, NICHOLAS : *We Beheld His Glory.* Morehouse Publishing Company, New York, 1936. 220 pages. Price $3.00.

In considering, in the course of this volume, the influence of Eastern Orthodox trends on Western Protestantism, Professor Arseniev discerns what he describes as " spiritual connecting threads ". Such an expression may well indicate, too, the character and achievement of his whole book. In it, intuition and scholarship have joined forces in presenting the rediscovery and renewal in our day of the inspired outlook of primitive Christianity. Professor Arseniev's field of research extends from the individual preoccupation, as indicated by German war letters from the Front, to the collective endeavours of the Oecumenical Movement, reviewing on the way the main tendencies and influences in modern theological thought. Everything links up in a sense of conviction and triumph in the power and concrete reality, for man, of the Resurrection, in all its individual, communal, cosmic and eternal implications. Professor Arseniev reveals the effect and outworking of this sense of reality and conviction in the dialectical teaching of modern Protestantism, in the sense of social fellowship expressed in Anglicanism, in the spontaneous fortitude and endurance shown by the martyred Russian Orthodox Church ; in the German High Church movement's ideal of an " evangelical catholicity " and in the growing permeation of Roman Catholicism with a sense of the mystical-concrete character of the Church.

This far-sighted survey reveals cross-currents and deviations ; it shows up weaknesses, inconsistency and even apathy. It suggests, too, a degree of disappointment in the activities of the Oecumenical Movement in which, for Professor Arseniev, ' Faith and Order ' alone has uninterruptedly preserved the living, creative spirit in which it came into being. But in spite of all shortcomings, he still encounters and reveals a renewal of the vigour and the realism of the Early Church, and a desire to understand the

Church as " a higher reality, concrete and mystical, rooted in God... the indwelling of the Holy Spirit among men, among brothers who are united in love."

Oecumenial Hymn Book

Early in 1935 a book was published in the Netherlands that occasioned a great stir. It contained 640 hymns, with melodies, from the Christian Church of all centuries and many denominations, together with a number of original hymns. The purpose of the compiler, the Rev. H. Hasper, of The Hague, has been to unite all Christians in the singing of the same hymns, feeling that in the midst of all differences, the religious hymn constitutes a uniting, common value. He has also compiled a special edition including harmonisations by Dutch and Flemish experts intended for four-part singing and for accompaniment. Pastor Hasper has, moreover, many friends in the Roman Catholic Church who are interested in Church music and he has received much valuable help and advice from them ; and he has been fortunate enough to secure for the special edition intended for Roman Catholic use, issued in January last, the approval of the Roman Catholic Censor for Church Hymns, with the " Evulgetur ". The value of this brotherly cooperation can hardly be over-estimated.

In a year the first popular edition (Fl. 1.50) of 30,000 copies has been almost sold out. A luxury edition on thin paper (Fl. 2.75) is now available. One edition containing the words and harmonisations (Fl. 4.50) has already appeared and others will follow this year, adapted for Protestant and Roman Catholic use respectively. Orders may be sent to " Geestelijke Liederen ", Postbus 333, The Hague.

HODGSON, Leonard : *The Grace of God in Faith and Philosophy.* (Longmans, Green and Co., London, New York, 1936). 183 pages. 6/- net.

In this extremely able book, the General Secretary of the Lausanne Movement for Faith and Order contributes, at perhaps the most vital point in the whole preparation for the Edinburgh World Conference, indispensable material on an aspect of oecumenical exchange of thought for which the Lausanne Movement has made itself responsible. The book contains the Bishop Paddock Lectures which the author recently went to the United States to deliver, and in the examination which they provide of the whole question as to the value of philosophy in the attempt to comprehend the Christian doctrine of Grace, the two schools of thought which came into conflict at the Reformation over the issues of the recognition of natural philosophy and the exclusive adherence to biblical revelation here confront each other once again. Religion and philosophy figure in these pages as elements which, if they are to remain true to their character, cannot leave each other out of account. Philosophy probes, enquires; religion asserts. Philosophy must wrestle with the new material presented by the reality of a religion which is actually being practised; and such a religion must insist upon philosophy so treating it. Philosophy based on the method of the ' great tradition ' is here put forward as the greatest effort of reasoning of which man has shown himself capable and, as such, as being fit to contribute, within its human limitations, to the endeavours to understand the Christian faith. The book goes on to examine the unique character of the Christian philosophy itself, with its basis, not on theory or ideal, but on the actual fact of God's revelation of Himself through Christ, and to develop the significance which such a revelation bestows upon history and the universe. These lectures culminate in a study of the problem of Grace, and of the disputes within the Church which its interpretation has involved. Canon Hodgson analyses the problem of " reconciling the ethical and personal character of the Christian religion with the truth of man's utter dependence on God's free gift of salvation" and in the confrontation presented between the Catholic and Protestant approaches to the paradox here involved, he gives, as indeed in this whole volume, an invaluable impetus to oecumenical progress.

The following Year Books or Annual Reports have been received :

Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; *Reports of Committees and Other Papers to be Presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England*; *The Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church*; *Jahresbericht des Vorstandes d. Schweizerischen Evangelischen Kirchenbundes über das Jahr* 1934-1935 ; *Year Book of the American Churches*; *Evangelischer Volkskalender*, 1936 ; *Evangelischer Pfarr-Almanach für die Freie Stadt Danzig*; *Directory of Christian Missions in India, Burma and Ceylon*; *Suomen Kirkon Vuosikirja*; *Svenski Kyrkoliv i Finland*; *Official Year Book of the Church of England* 1936 ; *Congregational Year Book* 1936 ; *Year Book* 1935 *of the Congregational Union of New Zealand*; *Svenska Kyrkans Arsbok* 1936 ; *Svenska Missionsforbundets Arberättelse.*

Other Books Received

WESTIN, Gunnar : *Negotiations about Church Unity*, 1628-1634. John Durie, Gustavus Adolphus, Axel Oxenstierna. (Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1932). 318 pages.

WESTIN, Gunnar : Svenska Kyrkan Och De Protestantiska Enhetssträvandena under 1630 Talet. (Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1934). 332 pages.

MACFARLAND, Charles S. : *Contemporary Christian Thought.* (Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1936). 204 pages. Price $1.50.

The Aims, Methods and Activity of the League of Nations. (Secretariat of the League of Nations, Geneva, 1935). 220 pages.

Petit Manuel de la Société des Nations. (Information Section, League of Nations, 1936). Fifth edition revised and completed. 314 pages.

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